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www.psc.sc.gov

Public Service Commission of South Carolina
Executive Center Dr., Suite 100
Columbia, SC 29210



POSTED
8/23/12
1001

Complaint Form

Print

Date: AUGUST 24, 2012 Docket 2012-177-WS

Complainant or Legal Representative Information: * Required Fields

Name * ALBERT K. STEBBINS, III, (HOMEOWNER)

Firm (if applicable)

Mailing Address * 16143 TANA TEA CIRCLE

City, State Zip * TEGA CAY, SC 29708

Phone * 803-548-0209

E-mail * BUZSTEBBINS@HOTMAIL.COM

Name of Utility Involved in Complaint: * TEGA CAY WATER COMPANY.

NOTE: If AT&T is the utility involved, please complete the attachment located at the end of this form.

Type of Complaint (check appropriate box below.) *

- ☐ Billing Error/Adjustments ☐ Deposits and Credit Establishment ☐ Wrong Rate ☐ Refusal to Connect Service
☐ Disconnection of Service ☐ Payment Arrangements ☐ Water Quality ☐ Line Extension Issue
☐ Service Issue ☐ Meter Issue
☒ Other (be specific) EXCESS PROPOSED WATER/SEWER RATE INCREASES

Have you contacted the Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS)? * ☐ Yes ☒ No Name of ORS Contact:

Concise Statement of Facts/Complaint: * (This section must be completed. Attach additional information to this page if necessary.)

UTILITY HAS PROPOSED EXCESSIVE INCREASES IN WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR THE OLDER PART OF TEGA CAY (A 43% INCREASE IN WATER RATES OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD AND MORE FOR SEWER RATES) RATES IN THE NEWER PART OF TEGA CAY ARE SUBSTANTIALLY LESS. SEE ATTACHED LETTER OF PROTEST

Relief Requested: * (This section must be completed. Attach additional information to this page if necessary.)

REQUEST PSC INVESTIGATE THE BASIS OF THESE INCREASES AND VERIFY WHY THEY HAVE INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY MORE THAN TWO-YEAR INCREASE OF COSTS AND WHY THE RATES ARE SO SUBSTANTIALLY MORE THAN FOR FORT MILL AND THE NEWER PART OF TEGA CAY. THE COMPANY SHOULD NOT PROFIT FROM ANY WASTEFUL OR INEFFICIENT OPERATIONS.

RECEIVED

AUG 24 2012

PSC SC
MAIL / DMS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)

VERIFICATION

COUNTY OF YORK)

I, ALBERT K. STEBBINS, III
Complainant's Name *

verify that I have read my complaint filed on AUG 24, 2012
Date *

and know the contents thereof, and that said contents are true.

Albert K. Stebbins, III
Complainant's Signature

Internal Use Only

Processed By	Date
HE	

Letter of Protest

Public Service Commission of South Carolina
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August 24, 2012

Docket: 2012-177-W6

I am protesting the rate hike request by our water & sewer provider known as Tega Cay Water Service. This company has been awarded rate increases and permits, as recently as 2010, over the objection of customers and concern of the Catawba Riverkeeper. TCWS has been the source of many issues with sewage overflow into the lake and surrounding properties. DHEC [or other governmental agency] had even required that they reduce the frequency and effects of these overflows. From memory, the public meetings held in 2010 showed they were supposed to achieve certain benchmarks from previous operational deficiencies that were not met. The TCWS was given the permit [and a rate hike] with the understanding it was to operate with various new benchmarks.

The 2012 letter, provided by TCWS, is an attempt to validate the requested rate hike. It highlights costs borne as a result of additional testing, oversight and compliance monitoring [my words]. This is absurd. The company has additional expenses to comply with a "punitive" action that resulted from their own negligence or poor management. This operation should have been performing regular maintenance and preventive measures while allocating adequate funds for proper maintenance and depreciation annually. Instead, the system has been allowed to depreciate and deteriorate while cash was harvested from the entity. This method of management should not be rewarded with additional customer funds to bail-out their failed oversight. Many customers have been hit by hard economic times or live on a fixed income and will have difficulty in absorbing this inflated rate request.

Consider the appearance of this situation;

- TCWS can operate at the highest margin possible by failing to invest and maintain a system.
- The system deteriorates due to poor management or negligence.
- The provider is penalized for poor management and results.
- The company invests money to perform the minimum required up-fit in a "band-aid" style repair to satisfy the regulators.
- Customers get a product that is similar or lower quality than that which caused regulators to act in the first place. [temporarily meets benchmarks but will shortly have similar or worse issues e.g. roots will grow back thicker and may further breach the pipe walls].
- Company asks for money invested to fix their previous errors and help pay for the added costs related to monitoring their deficient system.

If these funds are awarded, the company will only have suffered an "opportunity cost" related to the cash investment that bridged from the previous rate hike to current day. Effectively, the company that performs poorly enough to just barely operate while maximizing profitability is rewarded the most. This is not rational and should not be reinforced by the approval of this rate hike request.

Albert K. Stebbins, III
Albert K. Stebbins, III, Tega Cay, SC, 29708-8552

Phone 803-548-0209